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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

15 April 1952

STAFF MEMORANDUM NO. 220 (Revised)

Subject: Hasty Reflections upon Recent Soviet Political Warfare Tactics

I. The 9 April 1952 Note

1. The USSR on 9 April 1952 replied to the US, UK, and French notes of 25 March 1952 by suggesting that the four powers "without delay discuss the question of conducting free all-German elections." The USSR rejected the Western proposal that the UN Commission established in December, 1951 investigate the conditions under which these elections might be held and suggested instead that the study "could be carried out by a commission formed by the four powers fulfilling occupation functions in Germany." It also reiterated and defended three of the principal points of the Soviet draft German peace treaty of 10 March 1952:

- a. Germany is obligated not to enter any coalition or military alliance "directed against any power which took part with its armed forces in the war against Germany."
- b. Germany may maintain land, sea, and air forces "necessary for the defense of the country," and produce the war materiel necessary for those forces.
- c. The eastern frontier of the united Germany shall be established at the Oder-Neisse line.

2. The Soviet proposal for a four-power conference to discuss free all-German elections marks another shift in Soviet tactics. The Soviet attitude toward the UN investigating commission has been consistent

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since the US first proposed that the commission be appointed. This commission has been under steady attack from the Bloc, and the requests of the UN group to the Soviet Control Commission and to the GDR for permission to enter East Germany were not even answered. The USSR in the 9 April 1952 note asserted that "checking by the United Nations Commission of the existence of conditions for such elections is in contradiction with the United Nations Charter, which, in accordance with Article 107, excludes interference by the United Nations in German affairs."*

II. The Western Dilemma

3. The Soviet proposals of 10 March and 9 April may lead to a revolution in Soviet policy towards Germany and the West, but it is almost certain that these proposals are only moves in the elaborate Soviet campaign to prevent the integration of West Germany with the West and West German rearmament. They very skillfully place the Western Powers and the government of the Federal Republic in a difficult dilemma, from which there is no escape without some advantage to the USSR:

- a. If the West accepts the Soviet proposals and agrees to discuss free all-German elections in a four-power conference, the USSR will be able to stimulate West German desire for unity, divide the Western Powers, create suspicion of the Western Powers within Adenauer's government and throughout Germany, delay the entire Western program, and perhaps, through profiting from developments within and beyond Germany in the West, destroy both the progress made thus far and the foundations of that advance toward Western goals.
- b. On the other hand, if the West rejects the Soviet proposals, insists upon the UN commission, and presses ahead with its own program, the USSR may succeed in placing apparent responsibility for the division of Germany upon the West. The Bundestag, as a result, might not ratify the contractual

* The text of Article 107: "Nothing in the present charter shall invalidate or preclude action in relation to any state which during the Second World War has been an enemy of any signatory to the present charter, taken or authorized as a result of that war by the governments having responsibility for such action."

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agreement and the treaty establishing the EDC. Even if the agreements were ratified, the Adenauer government's position might be weakened, not strengthened, by its success in achieving its goal, integration. This coalition government might then be defeated in the September 1953 elections, with the new government revising or even reviewing the policy and with the USSR in a position to profit from the consequent German and Western division and demoralization.

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4. Although the Soviet proposals place the West in an uncomfortable dilemma, they also represent recognition by the USSR of appreciable progress by the West in approaching its goals. Western success in strengthening NATO and the approaching integration of West Germany into the Western political, economic, and military system have apparently led the Kremlin to this review and modification of its tactics. Moreover, there are limits to the Kremlin's ability to exploit its switch in tactics. The Adenauer government is aware that it has staked its future upon integration with the West and that it must, therefore, support the Western program or face complete defeat in the next elections. In addition, those Germans who wish that the Soviet proposal be fully explored must also realize that the hazards involved in that policy are considerable. If the discussions are begun, they will almost certainly fail. This will strengthen Adenauer's position greatly. Moreover, those political groups opposing the Western program of integration before unification shall then have played their major card and lost. Unification on Soviet terms, or even further discussion of unification before integration shall have been completed, will then be able to rouse very little support in West Germany. In other words, if the Kremlin tactic does not succeed in destroying the integration program, the Kremlin may be placed in a dilemma at the conference called at its request: it may have to yield a substantial concession, such as elections throughout Germany free according to Western definition, or it may have to end the discussion after the hollowness of its proposals has been clearly demonstrated. Elections throughout Germany free by Western standard would almost certainly result in the repudiation of Communism in East Germany; Soviet refusal to agree to such elections

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would increase Western understanding of Soviet objectives and tactics. Such a refusal, particularly when added to the 258 unsuccessful meetings over the Austrian peace treaty and the 78 meetings in the four months' futile discussion in Paris in 1951, would certainly reduce sharply the effectiveness of Soviet political tactics in Western Europe.

III. Estimated Impact of Soviet Proposals upon the West*

5. The most recent Soviet manoeuvre to delay and, if possible, to destroy the entire Western program for Germany is just getting underway, and it is extremely difficult to estimate its impact. If the Soviet campaign combines apparently genuine Soviet concessions with continued propaganda skill, it may lead to successful pressure by public opinion expressed through political parties for the delay of the Western integration and rearmament program. This pressure will be particularly serious in West Germany, where it may render precarious the position of Adenauer. It is unlikely to cause Adenauer to delay completing and initialing the contractual agreements. However, it may lead to the Bundestag's insisting that a real opportunity for achieving German unification has arrived and that discussions between the Western Powers and the USSR should be completed before the integration program is voted upon. If the USSR succeeds in initiating and prolonging the discussions, resistance within Germany to integration will probably increase and may lead to the Bundestag's rejecting Adenauer's program.

6. The UK and France have been placed in a dilemma by the Soviet proposals. Both countries, particularly France, fear a united and rearmed Germany, but the political parties governing both countries also believe it would be politically unwise, perhaps even disastrous, to reject the Soviet suggestion for a four power conference. The leaders of the governing parties are generally aware that the Soviet proposal does not represent a basic change in Soviet policy, but is designed only to delay, and if possible, to prevent the Western program. At the same time, those leaders estimate that public opinion in those countries, particularly within the left parties, does not appreciate the subtleties involved in the Soviet manoeuvres.

* For a more detailed analysis of the estimated impact of the Soviet proposals within West Germany, see Appendix A.

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As a consequence, the present governments of the UK and France must somehow avoid the responsibility for preventing or wrecking a four-power meeting, while they must simultaneously ensure that such a meeting shall not endanger the foundations of their foreign policies.

7. In summary, the Soviet proposals strike so skillfully at Western weaknesses that the Western Powers will probably be forced into long discussions over the agenda for another four-power meeting and perhaps into a meeting itself. The effect which the Soviet proposals will have will continue to depend upon the skill and resolution displayed by the USSR and by the Western Powers. If the USSR makes apparently substantial concessions in the preliminary notes -- e.g., agreement to discuss at the conference the right of a unified Germany to enter into an alliance -- Western willingness to integrate and rearm may be shaken seriously. On the other hand, if the Western Powers can succeed in forcing the USSR to refuse to discuss this right and to discuss the eastern boundaries of Germany, the effect of the Soviet manoeuvre may gradually decline.

IV. Probable Future Developments of the Soviet German Campaign

8. The West is probably now going to face a continued Soviet German unity campaign of unrivalled intensity and effectiveness. This new "political warfare tactic will probably be stimulated by several congresses, organized by the World Peace Council and based upon Kremlin offers to discuss and negotiate outstanding world issues, particularly Germany. It will be directed particularly at Western Europe and will concentrate above all upon West Germany. It will seek primarily to force the Western Powers into a four-power conference. It will emphasize German unity, the reopening of East-West trade, the high cost of Western rearmament, and, conversely, the possibility of international peace and prosperity through four-power cooperation.

9. At present, the Kremlin probably estimates that it can succeed in seriously delaying, and perhaps even in destroying, the Western integration and rearmament program without any substantial concessions on the part of the USSR. There is no evidence available which might indicate that a major change in Soviet policy towards the West is underway. Moreover, so long as the Kremlin continues to estimate that it can attain its objectives without making concessions,

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it will surely give little consideration to a basic change in its policy.

10. We continue to believe that the Kremlin would not give up or weaken its control over East Germany, even if it were clear to the Kremlin that only through a substantial Soviet concession could it prevent the integration of West Germany with the West and West German rearmament. The estimate in NIE-53, "Probable Soviet Courses of Action with Respect to Germany during 1952," (19 February 1952), remains firm: "In order to delay West German integration with the West and West German rearmament, the Kremlin might attempt negotiations on free elections throughout Germany, but only to gain time. The Kremlin almost certainly believes that free elections would result in a repudiation of Communism in East Germany. Moreover, the Kremlin would not be satisfied that a united Germany which was not under Soviet control could be kept neutral, or that Germany, once free, would not eventually rearm and turn against the USSR. We believe, therefore, that the Kremlin is unlikely actually to permit free elections to take place, even if the Kremlin were convinced that by this means it could block West German integration with the West and West German rearmament. As a tactical manoeuvre, the Kremlin might remove some of its more overt control mechanisms, including some of its military forces. We do not believe, however, that the Kremlin would so relax its control over East Germany as to affect the foundations of Soviet authority."

V. Current Soviet Objectives and Political Warfare Tactics

11. The principal immediate Soviet objectives are:

- a. To delay and prevent signature and ratification of the contractual agreements.
- b. To prevent the integration of West Germany into the Western defense system and to strengthen those forces in West Germany which believe that unification should precede integration.

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- c. To destroy the EDC and the entire Western program.
- d. To turn the nations of the West against each other.
- e. To separate the peoples of the West from their governments.
- f. To stimulate the desire of Western manufacturers for trade with the Bloc, to arouse dissatisfaction throughout the West with current export controls, and to cause economic strains among the Western nations and between the government and some business groups of each nation.
- g. To acquire for the Bloc the strategic materials and equipment now derived the Bloc by Western export controls.
- h. To demonstrate to the world that the US is responsible for current world tensions and for the economic strains produced by Western rearmament.
- i. To demonstrate to the world that the USSR is the champion of peace and of normal trade and that the responsibility for the continuation of the crisis lies solely with the US.

12. Western success in strengthening NATO and the approaching integration of West Germany into the Western political, economic, and military system have apparently led the Kremlin to review and to modify the tactics it has been using to attain its objectives. The decision to modify Soviet tactics has probably also been influenced by the growing effectiveness of Western export controls, which are increasing the difficulties of the European Satellites in particular in meeting planned industrial expansion programs. As a consequence, the Kremlin has apparently decided to emphasize those aspects of its two-year-old "peace" campaign designed to produce the impression that the USSR has drastically revised its policy and now seeks peaceful and friendly relations with the non-Soviet world. While these "conciliatory" tactics

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are being refurbished and re-emphasized, the Kremlin at the same time is maintaining direct heavy military pressure in the Far East and viciously attacking the US for alleged biological warfare in Korea and China. The contradiction involved in the use of conflicting tactics is more apparent than real, and the Kremlin probably realizes as well as Hitler did that "peace" campaigns are most effective when accompanied by military excursions and alarms. Indeed, the current political warfare campaign directed at Western Europe might be more effective if heavy battles were reopened in Korea than if a Korean armistice were negotiated.

13. The Kremlin has repeatedly sought to reduce and destroy Western gains in unity and strength by proposing measures which might lead the West to relax its efforts. In the summer of 1951, for example, Jacob Malik, the Soviet delegate to the UN, stimulated the beginning of armistice negotiations in Korea and stated to visiting Quakers that the USSR was ready to negotiate major international issues. Shortly afterwards, a new English-language newspaper appeared in Moscow emphasizing the need for "cooperation and friendship" among nations, the remarks of the British Foreign Secretary, Herbert Morrison, were printed in Pravda, and the USSR accepted a long-standing invitation to attend discussions sponsored by the UN on improving East-West trade.

14. While the USSR will probably continue its military and propaganda pressure in the Far East, remain adamant on the UN Disarmament Commission, and maintain its offensive attacks upon "western imperialism" through all of its propaganda media, there are numerous indications that the Kremlin is launching a new wave of conciliatory tactics to weaken and divide the West. The principal indications that this revised approach is being tried are:

- a. The 10 March 1952 proposal for a German peace treaty.
- b. The 9 April 1952 Soviet reply to the Western Powers which urged discussion by the four powers of the conditions under which German elections supervised by them could be held.

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- c. Stalin's letter to American newspapermen on the continued possibility of "peaceful coexistence." This theme was developed further by Izvestia, which declared that the Soviet government was prepared to solve by "peaceful means" all outstanding international issues.
- d. The International Economic Conference staged at Moscow, at which the establishment of a permanent international trade organization to improve East-West trade relations was recommended and at which Soviet leaders declared their eagerness to conclude immediate agreements for ten billion dollars of trade with non-Bloc countries.
- e. Stalin's interview of 5 April 1952, with the Indian Ambassador to Moscow, after which the Ambassador stated that there were "no outstanding problems now dividing the world which could not be settled by discussion and negotiation." However, there is no evidence showing that the Ambassador's words are those of Stalin. Moreover, in the account of the meeting which the Ambassador gave to the American charge in Moscow, neither the words quoted above nor negotiations were mentioned.
- f. A call for a religious conference in May of all denominations in the USSR by the Patriarch Alexius, under the slogan "The Church Together with the People for Peace." Invitations to this conference have been extended to some foreigners, probably to men such as the Dean of Canterbury and Pastor Niemöller.

15. However, there are no indications that a basic change in Soviet policy is planned or contemplated, and there is no evidence that the Kremlin is prepared to make any substantial concessions to the West. The conclusion of an armistice in Korea might support the assumption that the Kremlin now seeks peaceful and friendly relations, but agreement on an armistice may lead

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to further Bloc aggression elsewhere in the Far East and will probably lead also to sharp disagreement on a long-term political settlement in Korea. Conclusion of an Austrian peace treaty and the surrender or weakening of Soviet control over East Germany, which would provide far more substantial evidence that a revolution in Soviet policy is occurring are much less likely.

16. The current Soviet efforts to weaken and divide the West are probably only the first steps in a serious Soviet political warfare campaign. The scheduling of the religious conference in May, the World Peace Council meeting planned for June, the suggestions made at the Economic Conference for future meetings, and indications that the USSR expects that the discussions concerning a German peace treaty will continue for a long period of time all reveal that the Kremlin is now engaged primarily in probing the soft spots for a more intensive campaign designed to achieve its objectives in Western Europe.

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APPENDIX "A"

THE IMPACT OF THE SOVIET PROPOSALS WITHIN WEST GERMANY

1. Chancellor Adenauer regards the Soviet proposals as a direct challenge to his policy favoring the earliest possible integration of West Germany with the West. He is convinced that the USSR wants to neutralize Germany, and he has stated in a public address that German neutralization would be tantamount to integration with the Soviet bloc. He is opposed to Four-Power negotiations until after the integration of West Germany into the Western defense system, and he hopes that such talks can be averted by advancing strong Western preconditions which would probably be unacceptable to the USSR. Thus, he favors insisting that a united Germany be permitted to join the Western defense system; that the question of the Oder-Neisse line be included in any peace treaty negotiations; and that the UN Commission be allowed freely to examine conditions in East Germany in order to determine whether genuinely free elections can be held.
2. The Christian Democratic Party generally supports Adenauer's position on priority of integration over German unification. However, a minority of Christian Democrats, led by Kaiser, Minister of All-German Affairs, and including the leader of the Christian Democratic faction in the Bundestag, is believed to favor careful exploration of the Soviet proposals and a slowing down of current negotiations for Western integration.
3. Although in general agreement with the Western position, the Free Democrats profess to be highly exercised over the Saar Issue, party leader Euler having reportedly declared that his group would not vote on the European Defense pact until German control over the Saar had been restored. In addition, Vice Chancellor Bluecher, apparently intrigued by the prospect of unrestricted trade with the East, is believed to favor slowing down negotiations on integration.
4. While the right-wing German Party generally supports the Government position, it is somewhat critical of Adenauer for his support of European unity as against German unity. In addition, the German Party is highly critical, possibly genuinely so, of Adenauer's handling of the Saar Issue.

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5. Adenauer's chief opponent, the Social Democratic Party, is using the Soviet unity overtures for partisan political purposes. Thus, the Social Democrats insist that the Soviet overtures be exploited fully, that Four-Power talks be held, and that current negotiations with the West over integration be postponed. Moreover, the Social Democrats have abandoned their earlier insistence on UN supervision of elections. From the Social Democratic point of view, the Four-Power talks would have the additional advantage of complicating Adenauer's position politically. By opposing the Government and appealing to the German craving for unity, the Social Democrats have given powerful impetus to the Soviet proposals. This urge for unity will almost certainly delay the program for German integration with the West.*

6. The Soviet proposals have a strong appeal to special interest groups; the appeal of a national army to professional soldiers, of a neutral Germany to neutralists, and of unrestricted trade with the Soviet bloc to industrial interests.

7. According to a recent public opinion survey in West Germany, there is strong sentiment in favor of exploiting every possibility for a settlement involving German unity and a relaxation of international tension. In addition, there appears to be little support for the view that rapid integration with the West would serve Germany's best interests.

* In NIE-57, "Probable Political Developments in the West German Situation During 1952," paragraphs 23 and 24, it was stated that only proposals providing for international supervision of elections would satisfy the overwhelming majority of West Germans. While West Germans insistence on free elections will continue, support for the UN formula is now in doubt.